



NEWS RELEASE

FROM THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Contact: Meg Olberding, Meg.Olberding@seattle.gov, 206.639.9397

Housing Placements Up 35% for People Experiencing Homelessness in the First Six Months of 2018

Seattle Served 18,356 Households So Far in 2018

For First Time, City Institutes Accountability and Performance Measures

The City of Seattle's Human Services Department (HSD) released the results of its homelessness funding for the first six months of 2018. These results represent activity from January 1 through June 30, 2018 and show agencies receiving city funds served 18,356 households and helped 4,459 households exit to permanent housing (2,644) or maintain their housing (1,815). The 2,644 households exiting to permanent housing represent an increase of 35% (692 households) over the same time in 2017. In all of 2017, city funds helped 5,456 households exit to permanent housing or maintain their housing, which the city is on track to surpass.

"HSD began 2018 with clear goals – invest in programs that work and help more people connect to housing from all points in the homeless services system," said HSD Interim Director Jason Johnson. "Quarterly data helps us understand if the City's investments are supporting people effectively and identify how we can improve. We're encouraged by the increases in placing people in housing and grateful for the hard work human service providers have demonstrated in helping vulnerable people."

In 2018, the City of Seattle has a budget of over \$86 million across more than a dozen departments to invest in services for people experiencing homelessness and mitigate the impacts of people living unsheltered across the City. HSD oversees more than 157 contracts with programs throughout the city that provide services for people experiencing homelessness. Moving people into housing (exits to housing) and/or keeping them from becoming homeless is the primary measure of success for programs that received funding through the City's investments at HSD.

Highlights of First Six Months of 2018

- **Programs have served 18,356 households in first six months 2018, an increase of 5.4% (946 households) over 2017.**

- **4,459 households exited to housing (2,644) or maintained that housing (1,815) through city investments. The 2,644 households exiting to housing represents a 35% (692) increase over the first six months of 2017.**
- **Housing programs are moving people to permanent housing at an increased rate over 2017;**
- **Native American/Alaska Native and Black/African American households– populations that experience homelessness disproportionately – are moving to housing at increased rates in comparison to the first six months of 2017. Specifically, programs receiving city funds have helped more NA/AN households connect to housing in the first six months of 2018 (284 households) than in the entire year of 2017 (273 households); and**
- **In the first six months of 2018, 4,071 households were served by enhanced shelters and 691 exited to permanent housing, an increased rate of 7% of over the first six months of 2017.**

The Homeless Services System

Seattle invests in three primary categories for homeless services: **prevention** (keeping people housed), **emergency** (shelters and connection to housing), and **housing** (permanent housing that may or may not include subsidy and support services). Together, these create the homeless services system. Click [here](#) to read definitions of homeless services terminology.

Housing Programs are Moving More People to Permanent Housing Over 2017

All housing programs increased the rate at which they are moving households into housing or helping them maintain housing over the first six months of 2017.

- **Diversion:** Diversion primarily helps people avoid the emergency shelter system by offering one-time financial assistance and case management. Of the 593 households served in the first six months of 2018, 72% of households that left the program exited to permanent housing, a rate that is 11% higher than the first six months of 2017. In 2018, HSD increased funding for Diversion programs to \$2 million from \$1 million in 2017.
- **Rapid Rehousing:** This national best-practice which combines temporary rental assistance and case management to help people eventually assume their own housing costs, moved people to housing at a rate that is 5% higher than the first six months of 2017, and had a success rate of 80% in Q2 2018. HSD increased investment in Rapid Rehousing programs from \$4.3 million in 2017 to \$7.2 million in 2018.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** The most effective housing program for high-needs people experiencing homelessness, PSH offers ongoing housing and support services for people who need long-term assistance. PSH has a success rate of 97% in helping people maintain their housing or leave supportive housing to move to other kinds of permanent housing. The success rate in the first six months of 2017 was 95%. HSD increased investment in permanent supportive housing from \$9.3 million to \$13.2 million in 2018 in order to help people who need the highest level of services to successfully obtain and remain in housing.

Human Services Programs Help More Native American/Alaska Native and Black/African American Households Connect to Housing in 2018

Native American/Alaska Native (NA/AN) and Black/African American (B/AA) households experience homelessness disproportionately to their representation in the population of King County. These households are seven times and five times more likely to experience homelessness, respectively.

Programs receiving city funds have helped more NA/AN households connect to housing in the first six months of 2018 (284 households) than in the entire year of 2017 (273 households). In addition to serving more people, programs have increased their rate of success in connecting these clients to housing by 10% over 2017. 33% of NA/AN households exit homeless services to permanent housing in the first six months of 2018, up from 23% in the first six months of 2017.

In the first six months of 2018, there were 1,713 B/AA household exits to permanent housing from homeless services programs, an increase of 351 household exits over last year. 37.5% of B/AA households leaving homeless services entered permanent housing, an increase of 10% over the last year's rate of 27.5%.

"During the 2018 funding process, HSD asked homeless services providers to join us in helping more Native American and Alaska Native households and more Black and African American households enter permanent housing from homeless services programs. We are pleased to see this progress and look forward to continued improvement," said Jason Johnson.

Supportive Services Result in Improved Housing Results

Enhanced shelters, which provide 24/7 or extended hours of services, storage for belongings, and case management, have continued to support more people in finding permanent housing. In the first six months of 2018, 4,071 households were served by enhanced shelters, and 691 exited to permanent housing, an increase rate of 7% of over the first six months of 2017. Enhanced shelters have a rate of moving clients to housing that is five times that of basic, overnight shelters.

The City's basic shelters and permitted villages continue to be a critical component to the City's emergency response to provide safer spaces for people experiencing homelessness. So far in 2018, they have served more than 3,750 households in the first six months of 2018. Seattle first invested in sanctioned encampments in 2015. Since this time, HSD has increased support for tiny houses, hygiene services, and case management. Residents often face many barriers to finding stable housing and are more likely to find that stability with more support services. In 2018, Seattle has expanded to support eight villages, with a ninth expected to open this fall, which provide spaces for more than 350 people per night. The City's Villages are at capacity every night and have supported 17% of households who exit the program in finding permanent housing in the second quarter, a decrease of 5% over the same six-month period in 2017. In recognition that more services support improved housing outcomes, the City increased case management support at the Villages in the second quarter. HSD will continue to monitor the performance results of this program quarterly.

"City-funded homeless services programs are serving more than 18,356 households in 2018, an increase of over 5% from last year. This tracks with what our providers have seen - more and more people are experiencing housing instability in our rapidly growing region. Their needs are outpacing the City's homelessness prevention, emergency and housing services capacity. HSD is pleased with the continued

improvement in the system's housing results, but a continued regional focus on creating more housing is key to helping people exit the homeless services system permanently," said Johnson.

City Implements New Accountability and Performance Measures

In 2016, the City of Seattle, King County, and the United Way of King County adopted the same performance standards in a memorandum of understanding signed in 2016. In addition, the City of Seattle has established and implemented in 2018 new performance standards in City programs including diversion, prevention, outreach and engagement, basic day and hygiene centers, and villages. 2018 is the first year the City is implementing full accountability measures across all programs. Each of these programs have different targeted standards.

In 2018, HSD implemented performance pay for key areas of investments: emergency shelter and enhanced day centers, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing - this rewards programs with the full amount of their contracted award when they meet performance standards. While both HSD and King County use performance pay contracting based on the adopted performance standards, HSD pays programs based on the rate of exits to permanent housing standard and King County pays programs based on the utilization rate standard.

In Q2 2018, 65% of the programs subject to performance pay contracting met the standard for exits to permanent housing. 31 of 48 programs total subject to performance pay contracting are meeting standards.

HSD is partnering with the remaining programs to develop improvement plans and to ensure that the City's contract policies are being operationalized to support the intended result – helping more people move from homeless services programs to permanent housing. HSD has an intensive process in place to partner with the remaining programs to increase the likelihood that they will receive full payment in future quarters. HSD is committed to using any funding that wasn't paid out to support technical assistance and training designed to help programs move more people to permanent housing.

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